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XVIII.—*Journey into the Interior of British Columbia.*

By MATTHEW B. BEGBIE, Esq., Justice.

Communicated by the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, F.R.G.S., H. M. Secretary for the Colonies.

Read, December 12, 1859.

Justice BEGBIE to Governor DOUGLAS.

SIR,

Victoria, April 25, 1859.

I have to report to you my return from the circuit which I have just held in British Columbia, as far as the Fountains, to which point I followed nearly the course of the Fraser River. Thence I returned by the Lilloet route and the Harrison River to Langley.

I have already had the honour to report, for your information, the proceedings at Langley, at Fort Hope, and at Fort Yale.

Accompanied by Mr. Nicol, the High Sheriff of British Columbia, and by Mr. Bushby, the Registrar and Assize Clerk, I left Fort Yale on foot on the 28th ult., with an Indian servant, and seven other Indians carrying our tent, blankets, and provisions, for Lytton, on the forks of Thompson River.

Acting on the suggestions of the Chief Commissioner of Land and Works, Mr. Nicol and I made a reconnaissance of the entire road travelled over; the result of which I hope shortly to be able to plot out and place in your Excellency's hands.

There being a considerable quantity of snow on the ground we could not follow the mule-trail, but kept on the right bank of Fraser River until two or three miles below Quayome or Boston Bar. There are one or two restaurants on the road; one at Spuzzum, one at the top of the hill immediately above Yale, one at Quayome, and another about 18 miles from Lytton; but we found it would have been an extreme inconvenience to have been without a tent and without a sufficient supply of provisions for the entire route.

It would even be extremely economical to provide at Fort Yale the whole of the necessary stores to carry round the whole way across the portage between Lake Anderson and Lake Lilloet. Provisions we found to be at unusual prices, flour being 1s. 8d. to 2s. per lb., until we arrived at Lake Lilloet.

The trail between Fort Yale and Quayome, by which we advanced, is by this time, I should think, utterly impassable for any animal, except a man, a goat, or a dog. It might doubtless be very much improved. In many places a very painful and dangerous ascent and descent of 20 minutes, in the whole course of which the traveller depends almost as much on his hands as on his feet, brings the path to within a few yards of the projecting precipice, through which a few pounds of powder would have made an easy way. But it suggested itself as extremely doubtful whether it would be worth while at present to engage in any improvements on this part of the line until the far easier Lilloet route be rendered practicable, as it might for a considerable extent very readily be, for carts.

Between Fort Yale and Quayome there did not appear to be any land, except a few spots here and there of a very few acres in extent, capable of cultivation. But the soil was rich and well fitted for roots, and at Spuzzum accordingly the Indians had considerable potato-patches; but nothing like an English farm could be established.

Above Quayome the trail to Lytton presents no serious obstacles to prevent a cart-road being made except in two places. The country above Quayome

changes its aspect very much. There are almost immediately found benches of fertile land comparatively free from underwood, but tolerably thickly wooded with large trees; not more than convenient, however, for farming purposes, which in fences, fuel, and log-huts, rapidly consume timber. About half a day's journey below Lytton a considerable enclosure of about 200 acres is made by felled trees; a Frenchman, whose name I did not learn, intending to make a farm there. Very many such might be made.

There are considerable beds of slate opening on the Fraser River, a couple of miles above Quayome, and these make their appearance two or three times before arriving at Lytton. At the place where I observed the first slate-bed there is also apparently a spring highly charged with carbonate of lime; but it does not appear to be abundant, and, as far as I could trace, appeared to flow but from a very little distance above the bank. Leaves and branches of trees were thickly encrusted with a chalky or marly deposit, but were not hardened or petrified. There were also on the beaches of the river often seen limestone boulders, but I did not observe any *in situ*.

There was a great change in the climate after passing the Quayome River, it was much drier, the springs less frequent, the soil sandier, the undergrowth much less dense; and the spruce, hemlock, Douglas, and cedars, which we had carried all the way from the sea, all disappeared by degrees, and were replaced by a pine, very similar to the Scotch fir, but with longer spines. The first place where we noticed this tree we named Scotch-fir Point.

Lytton does not appear a well-chosen site for any town; it is on the higher of two benches, parallel to each other and to the River Fraser, the lower one being the narrowest, both terminating in a very steep descent, as steep as a man can descend without using his hands, to the River Thompson. I should think 300 or 400 feet deep. The upper plateau on which Lytton is placed descends by a similar bank of about 100 feet high to the narrow bench, which again descends by a similar precipitous bank upon the Fraser River. At the south end of the town there is a very deep gully, which runs a considerable way into the mountains on the east of the river. Up this gully a road might be brought from the Fraser; it is, I think, the easiest way, but it would probably be from 1 mile to 1½ mile in length, for carts. There is only one little rill of water to supply the town; it is adequate for the few houses now there, but quite insufficient for a town of any size. Mr. Nicol and I ascended its course, which is an artificial ditch wrought by miners, for about 1½ mile, in order to see whether it was larger at its source, or diminished by percolation, as we had been told that at that distance it was 15 times its bulk below. We found that this was an entire misrepresentation; we fancied, indeed, but sometimes entirely changed our opinion, that the stream above contained somewhat more water. We had no means of gauging the rill. It is probably the fact that some water is lost, which by a careful system of waterproof piping might be available for the supply of the town. But at best it would be no more than a tolerably rapid flow in a channel a foot wide and 4 or 5 inches deep, not much more than in a sluice-head on a single mining-claim.

Waterworks might easily be constructed to any extent upon the Thompson River, which runs swiftly, and in a very clear and abundant stream. From the nature of the soil I do not think wells would answer. I recollect that when I was on the spot the soil appeared to be more dried up than it now appears. I believe that the appearance was caused, not by aridity, but by severe cold. It is, however, very dry. There is on the right bank of the Fraser, above the Forks about three-quarters of a mile, a much more eligible site for a town—a plateau communicating with the river at a convenient height, and again with many other plateaus of various sizes and of various

heights above it, with abundant water-supply in a large brook which runs strongly behind it, and abundance of wood behind, which at Lytton appears to have been rather scanty at the first, and now is all swept off for log-houses and fires. The only objection to this other site is, that it is a short distance above the mouth of Thompson River, so that travellers up that river would have to go three-quarters of a mile out of their way to visit the town.

The shores of Fraser River were thinly dotted by miners on both sides. The great mass of miners were forcing their way up with provisions in boats. A very few were going up on foot; nearly the same number were returning on foot, alleging the high prices of provisions in the upper country. They were high enough at Lytton, where we were charged 3 dollars a head for each meal, consisting mainly of bacon and hearth-made bread.

It was a great disappointment to us that Captain Travillot absented himself from Lytton during the whole of our three days' sojourn there. There were many complaints as to the manner in which decisions had been made by him, but in my opinion they did not involve any amount of corruption; but the errors (if any) were such as might reasonably arise from inexperience, and the absence of books or advice. It was a great inconvenience to have no access to any books or plans of the town, which were all locked up. There were a few contested lots, but not many; and I should think the difficulties are not hard to settle.

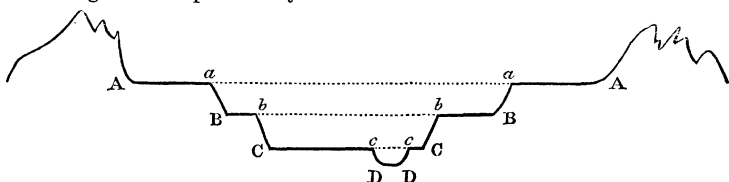
There was a considerable degree of anxiety manifested everywhere for the possession of land; in some instances the mere right to take the crop was not satisfactory, in other it was acquiesced in.

At Lytton considerable excitement was manifested with reference to some ditch regulations, which were then recently promulgated, and which I had not seen until I found them placarded on Captain Travillot's office door. The miners generally alleged that the quantity of water allowed to a ditch was too small; that in consequence of the lightness of the soil the water in a ditch is lost by percolation; and although calculated by the Government to be sufficient for two sluice-heads, and charged as for two claims, is in fact scarcely enough for one when it reaches the spot worked; and that lumber is so dear and scarce (375 dollars per thousand, in fact not to be had in any quantity) that fluming is impossible. The gold they allege to be very uncertain in its deposit, and that small claims may sometimes be worked out in a day, while others may prove extremely valuable. They allege further, that it is very convenient to have, or to be allowed to have, ditches owned by parties entirely unconnected with the claims, who may sell the water in those ditches without limitation as to price or quantity. They did not seem to object to the limitation to sell only to licensed miners.

As my own view on the theory which I formed of the geological formation of the Valley of the Fraser in this direction is, that the whole valley and benches together are auriferous, and would pay under a large system of water-working, I did not pay great regard to their complaints as to the uncertain nature of the deposits in the claims, which, indeed, I had from practical experience an illustration of. Mr. Nicol and myself washed about 20 pans, and obtained 75 cents' worth of gold. The next 5 pans taken from the same spot yielded 2 dollars, all in rusty scale-gold.

The singular feature of level benches of various breadth, consisting of vast thicknesses of alluvial deposits, loam more or less sandy, and waterworn boulders, gravel, and pebbles, the benches being of various heights one above the other, parallel in their general direction with the course of the river and the mountains between which it runs, and generally matched on either side of the river, forcibly recalls the "parallel mountain roads," as they are called, among the Grampians in Scotland; which are now generally accounted for by geologists on the theory of the whole space between the boundary hill ranges

having been originally a vast lake, and of successive elevations of the earth's surface, a theory to which the neighbourhood of active volcanic ranges appears to me to give much plausibility.



According to this theory,—to which Mr. Nicol and I gave attention in considering the country, and which seemed to explain all the phenomena, and to acquire additional plausibility from the different appearances which we remarked as we proceeded, but a detail of which would be out of place,—A A, along the dotted line, formed at one time the bed of the lake. The earth's surface was locally raised, so that B B stood as high above the level of the sea as A A originally stood. The sudden rush of water swept away by denudation all the portion of the original deposit included between B B, a a. A similar upheaval again occurred, which caused the denudation of the space b, C C, b. A third denudation, c, D D, c, left the water to flow, no longer in a lake, but contracted to the limits of a river, in its present bed D D. It is probable that when so large a lake existed above the Forks, it would arrest, as in a trough,—exactly as is done by the miners' sluicing-trough at the present day, only on a gigantic scale,—all the finer particles of gold brought down by the river from the mountain in the distant upper country. It is probable, therefore, that at the distant geological epoch, when a long lake or a long series of lakes extended for many miles above the Big Cañon—as far as I visited the country, from about Quayome to some miles above the Fountains, a distance of 80 or 90 miles—the banks and bed of the river below these lakes was not auriferous, at all events not so highly auriferous as at the present day. But on the theory that the sediment at the bottom of these lakes was all more or less auriferous, and that vast quantities of the sediment in successive portions were, upon each successive upheaval of the surface, hurried down by the mighty rush of waters through the Cañons, and into and over the smoother country below them, commencing at Fort Yale, we have again an exact repetition of the process witnessed every day in every rocker throughout the country. An enormous quantity of "pay dirt" was at each upheaval cast into the vast sluice of the Fraser.

The scale-gold would be all intercepted in the rough beds of the river as it successively grooved out for itself another and another channel through the ancient bed of the original lake, or at all events in the holes and eddies in the rocks in its passage through the Cañons.

This is the sieve of the rocker, where the scale-gold is—unless the rocker be unevenly worked—always retained. The finer particles, the flour or dust gold as it is called, would be carried over the sieve by the rush of water on to the blanket, and would principally be retained in the first part of the blanket, nearest the sieve. Hill Bar, Prince Albert Flat, and the district generally from Fort Yale to Fort Hope, accordingly, are all impregnated with flour-gold, more or less, and generally more so than the country below, or far below Fort Hope. But the whole of the blanket in a rocker is worth searching, and is accordingly searched by the miner periodically; and we find "flour-gold" accordingly down to Langley. It is a further corroboration of this theory, that while flour-gold does not amount to above 15 per cent. of the gold found at the Forks—85 per cent., or upwards, of the gold found there

being scale-gold—I have never heard of a single scale being found at or below Fort Yale.

If this view be correct, there are therefore in the benches at and around Lytton dry diggings on the most enormous scale. The district which I visited from Quayome to the Fountains is about 70 miles long, and from 1 mile to 5 or 6 miles wide; and in many places 100, 200, and 400, in some even 1000 feet thick. Every spadeful I believe to be auriferous. The bed of the river pays the whole distance from 5 to 100 dollars per hand per day; 12 dollars is not unusual. It is, however, probable that the banks high above the river could not be worked advantageously without the application of copious washing. But the streams from the mountains on each side are very rare compared with what is found below the Quayome, and water privileges are correspondingly valuable. There is of course a never-failing supply in the Fraser; but many of the benches are 600, and even, I should guess, 1000 feet above its present bed (by estimation); and considerable hydraulic works would have to be undertaken, and by very different ditches and on different principles from those now in force. It would be a question of engineering on a large scale.

The character of the country at Lytton is preserved all the way to the Fountains; and for as far as the eye can reach above the Fountains some 4 or 5 miles the whole of the country is tolerably well adapted for stock. It appears rather too dry a climate for arable cultivation. There is abundance of bunch-grass. Water is not everywhere met with on the benches above the river, but the Fraser is always there.

The soil is sometimes covered with shingles, at other times too sandy; but in general a light loam. The pine-trees already described appear, by their resinous spiky leaves, which strew the ground in great abundance, to make it much drier than it otherwise would be. These trees would soon be removed for firing, enclosures, and houses, and the country improve accordingly. There is no underwood.

We procured horses from the Indian chief Spindlem for carrying our blankets, &c., over this portion of the route. In consequence of the dangerous nature of one part of the trail, called the "Slide," a few miles above Foster Bar, 18 miles from Fountains, the mule-trail quits the Fraser at Foster Bar and ascends a small stream to an elevated plateau, descending by a beautiful valley to the plateau above the Fountains.

On the top of the pass we found (7th April) three lakes all frozen. Mr. Nicol and I got upon one, and found the ice about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. This plateau, however, wherever the snow was cleared away, showed an uncommonly rich vegetation in grass, equal almost to that on the Pitt Meadows; a fine rich black mould, and uncommon advantages (save for its great cold) for dairy farming. It appeared as if an unbounded number of cattle might be maintained in this valley, or rather double valley and pass, the lower parts of which seemed well adapted for the plough.

The pass, which we estimated at about  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles long from Foster Bar, opens on the two vast level plains, on the lower of which Fountains is situated.

These, each of them, contain apparently 1000 to 1500 acres, with scarcely a tree or deviation from level; covered only with bunch-grass, and terminated on all sides, except towards the mountains, by precipitous descents towards the river, each of which we conjectured to be not less than 500 feet; so that the upper plateau might be 1000 feet above the level of the river.

From hence Fraser River is seen coming down in a succession of beds in a narrow bed edged with high narrow benches from the north-west, closely confined by lofty mountains from 4000 to 7000 feet high.

On the southern part of the lower plateau are a few houses, stores, and tents. This is the Fountains. We had fresh meat here, the first since leaving

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Fort Yale. We found that Captain Travaillot, who had promised to meet us here, had left on the previous day, leaving word that he would wait for us at the point where the Lilloet trail falls on the Fraser River. There were notifications of the new ditch orders, and that one Mr. Kelley, who kept stores there, was appointed to receive payment of mining-licenses and other Government moneys. The price of provisions was higher, if anything, here than at Lytton. The place seemed very dull. There were a few miners passing up and down. Some settlers seemed disposed to build; but the majority of those persons I saw wore an idle look. The bulk of the miners pass along the river far below, and, being supplied with their own provisions, they do not climb the high steep bank, at the top of which there is nothing to reward their pains; for the stores are of the commonest sort, and there are no drinkable liquors, nor, so far as I could see, any facilities for gambling. The spot is probably the best in the immediate neighbourhood for a town.

We left the Fountains the same afternoon for the place called Lilloet in this neighbourhood, *i.e.* the spot where the Lilloet route falls on the Fraser, and which I shall designate by the name Cayoosh. The river which drains the lakes Anderson and Seton, and falls into the Fraser at this point, is called "Nkoomptch Falls." But 2 miles above the Fraser it receives a considerable accession in the Cayoosh brook, which being more easily pronounced is preferable, and is used in the locality among the whites to designate the Nkoomtch proper. The trail, which is in general on a bench, with interruptions in some places, but which might easily be made into a good waggon-road, passes in front of the mouth of the Seclatqua or Bridge River at 2 miles; and at 4 miles below Fountains crosses by the ferry recently granted by Captain Travaillot to Aimable Bonnet and Calmel. The tolls are, perhaps, not too high for the present rates of wages and provisions. The right is only granted for a year, and at the end of that time, or of a second year, they might probably be revised. The ferrymen were about to establish immediately a boat for foot-passengers opposite Cayoosh, as it was found that many people crossed there. I saw a good deal of them during several days; they seem civil and well-conducted men.

Cayoosh is decidedly the most favourable position for a town that I have seen above Fort Hope, apart from its important position at the gorge of the Lilloet route. It is on the right bank of the river Fraser, at some distance from the river, and at a considerable height above it. The level benches on each side of the river, and which are all perfectly free from underwood, extend from above Fountains to a considerable distance below Cayoosh, on the left bank, and terminate a little below the junction on the right bank of the Fraser, a distance of at least 11 or 12 miles in length, and of a breadth in the whole varying from 1 to 4 miles. There are probably some 20 or 30 square miles of land ready for immediate occupation; the whole of which is fit for some description of farming, and about half of it admirably adapted for any description, either sheep, cattle, or the plough. In some places it is too sandy, in others too strong, for the plough; but in these places there is an abundance of bunch-grass, well adapted for stock of any sort. The soil is uniformly a red loam, in some places of exceeding richness and friability, degenerating in some parts into sand, in others covered thickly with large water-worn pebbles.

I have already pointed out to your Excellency a sketch of the particular plateau on which we, Mr. Nicol, and myself, thought a town could be with most advantage placed. It is on the right bank of the Fraser, immediately above its confluence with the Cayoosh.

Two chiefs, said to be of extensive authority, paid me a visit while at Cayoosh. They complained of the conduct of the citizens of the United States in preventing them from mining, in destroying and carrying away their

root-crops without compensation, and in laying wholly upon the Indians many depredations on cattle and horses which these Indians informed me were in part, at least, committed by "Boston men." On the other hand, many cases of cattle-stealing were alleged by the whites of all nations against the Indians; and stealing, indeed, of anything which could by possibility be eaten. For even the cattle which Indians stole they did not attempt to sell or make use of otherwise than as food; and it was admitted on all hands that many hundreds of Indians had died of absolute starvation during the winter. The Indians said that the salmon had failed them now for three years together.

The whites alleged, what is obvious to everybody, that the Indians are extremely averse to work, except under the pressure of immediate hunger; and that they are so improvident as rarely to look beyond the wants of the day, and never to consider the wants of a winter beforehand. If I may venture an opinion, I should think that this is much more true of the savages who have never been brought into contact with civilization than with those who have had even a little acquaintance with the whites. We found almost everywhere Indians willing to labour hard for wages, and bargaining acutely for wages; and perfectly acquainted with gold-dust, and the minute weights for measuring one and two dollars with. These circumstances are inconsistent with an utter heedlessness for next day's provisions, for in all cases we had to find these Indians in provisions as well as wages. And the amount of wages for the most abject drudgery to which human labour can be put, viz. carrying burthens, being 8s. per day and provisions, pretty uniformly wherever we went, shows of itself a very high average rate of profit as the wages of labour in British Columbia. If this is the average remuneration of the most unskilled labour, what ought skilled labour, supported by capital, to earn?

It was the uniform practice of storekeepers to entrust these Indians with their goods, generally 100 lbs. of flour, beans, or pork, and provisions for their own subsistence. Thefts were said to be unknown, and great care taken of their burdens. And these individuals who work I found extremely fleshy and hearty. My impression of the Indian population is, that they have far more natural intelligence, honesty, and good manners, than the lowest class—say the agricultural and mining population—of any European country I ever visited, England included.

At Cayoosh I tried to cause a grand jury to be summoned to present all these matters formally to me; but there were not twelve British subjects there.

The road from Cayoosh to Lake Seton, 16 miles, according to the point of departure, is in one part not practicable for mules. They ford the stream accordingly at present.

The muleteers propose to bridge the stream before the summer floods set in. They have already bridged it in one place, between Lake Seton and Lake Anderson, at their own expense of 180 dollars.

With one exception, there is no bridge on the Lilloet trail comparable to this; and with that one exception (worth, perhaps, 80 to 100 dollars), no ten bridges on that trail are together as considerable. This part of the route might be easily made a good carriage-road by means of two bridges, one of which, however, on to the bench at Cayoosh, would be a considerable undertaking. The rest of the distance would be a very simple matter indeed. The ground is flat and tolerably clear, the bottom very sound, large coarse gravel, affording excellent foundation; and there is on different slides from the cliffs any amount of beautiful naturally-broken macadam of any size. The actual trail shrinking from crossing the stream follows generally a narrow, rocky, precipitous, winding goat-path along the cliff. The mules follow the other trail partly.

On Lake Seton there is excellent access to the water; it never freezes. There are here two or three houses used by the boatmen and muleteers. This



little settlement I suggest may be called Seton Foot. There is a very good whale-boat and a scow in bad condition on this lake. The mountains come down on it so steeply for the greater part of its length on both sides that I should consider a road out of the question.

At the upper end there were also a few houses, and another boat building, probably launched by this time. It is stated that from the point where the Nkoomptch and the Cayoosh join, the valley of the Cayoosh Proper leads to another large lake, which leads to a pass, the other side of which descends on Harrison Lake, a distance of three days. This point of junction of the Cayoosh and Nkoomptch is of course below Lake Seton; it would of course be extremely important to discover such a pass, as it would be shorter than the present Lilloet route from the mouth of the Harrison River to the middle Fraser, especially having in view the very bad access to the upper ends of the Lilloet and Harrison lakes at Pemberton and Douglas. I conceive, however, that a shorter way may be found, which will not pass over any part of the Harrison River, and which may proceed by this Cayoosh Lake across some pass yet to be discovered, down upon a very long valley, which opens upon Fraser River from the north-west, and falls upon Fraser River about 15 miles above the Harrison, and which was noticed last January and marked in the reconnaissance then made. There are a few houses at the upper end of Lake Seton which I suggest might be called Seton Head.

From Lake Seton to Lake Anderson, about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mile, is practicable for a cart. There seems very little fall in the stream which runs from one lake to the other. It might probably be canalized at no great expense; a steamer could then go from the upper end of Lake Anderson to the lower end of Lake Seton without unloading. I calculated the lengths at  $13\frac{1}{2}$  to  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles for Lake Seton, and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to 13 miles for Lake Anderson. They are generally reckoned 3 miles longer, each of them; but boatmen usually exaggerate, and I was as careful as I could be and reckoned both by estimation and time. A steamer would be very useful, as we found on all the lakes. On every one we found either a dead calm, or a fresh breeze blowing up or down the lake, sometimes both ways at the different ends, which greatly delays the navigation in the row-boats now in use. On two lakes we had favourable winds; on two we were delayed for 24 hours by contrary winds.

At the upper end of Lake Anderson there is a pretty little site for a small town. The Lilloet trail, properly so called, commences here. It is a cart-way for some little distance; it might very readily, and for a few hundred dollars, be made practicable for carts for some miles, indeed at a very small expense for the whole distance to Lake Lilloet. It generally follows the old Indian trail, which may be seen here and there swerving to the one side or the other. It only deviates in two places close to Lake Anderson, and again a few miles before arriving at Lake Lilloet, in both instances apparently to avoid bridging streams which the Indians forded, and which could be bridged, the first for a very few score, the second for a very few hundred dollars. The deviations in each case appeared to be larger for the worse. There are many places in which a slight deviation, and the removal of a few barrow-loads of earth, or of a tree or two, would have effected a great improvement; but there the trail was followed.

The other deviation, near Lake Lilloet, leads by a shorter road over a hill to the lake. The Indian trail proceeds down the watercourse to the River Lilloet, some few miles above the head of the lake where there are reported to be some 5 or 6 square miles of exceedingly rich prairie-land. If the road were carried by a bridge across the Homush or Xoblish River, and again across the Lilloet, it would run nearly on a level all the way from Lake Anderson, and would open out this fertile valley, and fall on the Lilloet Lake at a point much better adapted for a harbour than that selected, and which is

only approachable within three-quarters of a mile when the lake is flooded. On neither side of the lake, indeed, is there any space for even a goat-path, unless it were hewn away. But on the side actually chosen (the E, or left side), there is for miles from the lake no place where three houses could be placed together; the ground is so excessively rocky and irregular, and there is no natural facility for forming a harbour. On the right side of the lake there are two islands which seem to invite a couple of spars to be laid, which is all that is necessary to form a beautiful harbour; and the country, once escape a couple of hundred yards from the lake, is capable enough of being built on. There is at present a complete monopoly thrown into the hands of the restaurateur in the only building at Pemberton.

Lake Lilloet is quite impracticable, I conceive, for a road along its shore. The terminus at the lower end (where there is also a restaurant) is very badly placed, and the people were about to remove it 400 or 500 yards lower down.

This lake connects, by a twisting rapid stream of about 1200 yards, with the Little Lake Lilloet, extending 6 miles further. This may at some future day be canalized so as to allow a steamer to run about 21 to 22 miles without unloading. At present the navigation of the upper lake stops above the rapids, and as a good level road may easily be made along the edge of the lake on the left shore, where the ground is flat, well wooded, and not too much underwood, not subject to overflow—in short, very well adapted for a road; not much use can perhaps at present be made of this lower or smaller lake.

For 20 miles further there might easily be a cart-road carried down the Lilloet, which it would probably be necessary to bridge twice. Mr. Nicol conjectured that a good bridge might cost 800 or 1000 dollars, but this was of course an estimate of the loosest description. There are some very curious hot-wells about  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the lower end of the Lilloet Lake. The water issues from a mass of conglomerate 6 or 8 feet high, and the same width partially imbedded in the hill-side. From the centre issues the hot spring, large enough to fill a trough of the area of 4 inches square, probably at the height of about 2 feet from the bottom of the rock. On each side, out of the same mass of conglomerate, there issues a spring of cold pure water of about the same bulk, and all three unite in a small pool, and form one stream, which falls into the Lilloet about 100 yards off. The trees in the neighbourhood are of a singular vigour and beauty, both hemlock, cedar, &c., and also maple and other deciduous trees. The water is extremely soft and agreeable to wash in; it has a slight sulphureous taste, and also is slightly chalybeate. It has a very perceptible odour, but is perfectly clear and colourless. We had no means of testing its temperature accurately, but even after some admixture of the cold springs it is hotter than the hand can bear; I should say probably  $140^{\circ}$  F. We gave to it the name of "St. Agnes' Well."

The last 15 or 20 miles of the trail towards Port Douglas, undoubtedly present greater difficulties than all the other part of the Lilloet route; and the worst part is that immediately falling on the Harrison Lake, which at present terminates at Port Douglas. This situation, though romantic and beautiful, and offering to vessels lying in its little lake a secure harbour during seven or eight months in the year, has such natural defects, that nothing but necessity can justify its adoption or retention for a moment. For four or five months in the year, if not for a longer period, it may be said to be inaccessible either by land or water, except on foot.

It is situated at the foot of a hill. The trail ascends, for upwards of an hour, immediately from high-water mark, and we found the greater part of this hill encumbered with snow to such an extent (18th April), that pack-mules could only make 10 miles in two days, and were nearly exhausted with that distance. In summer-time the snow will not be there, but the waters will then be out, and it is to be apprehended that some parts of this trail will be less passable in June than in April. The snow though often 4 and 5 feet deep, had begun

to melt a good deal during the day, though it generally froze again at night, and the trail was in several places for 100 yards ankle-deep in water; indeed, it often appeared as if the trail had been led into and along the dry bed of some watercourse by the persons who undertook to make the trail; a plan which is open to the objection, that when the waters are out, and a road is most needed, the road is at its worst. This observation is not to be confined to the portion of the trail next Port Douglas; on the contrary, this part shows more frequent indications of the hand of man than any other portion of the route. At one point, however, it is particularly annoying to find that the trail is conducted up and along some rather unusually broken ground with the very centre and strength of a waterfall of considerable size, far more than sufficient to turn any ordinary mill; and although we were able to scramble round it at a considerable risk of a tumble, and ankle-deep in water, it is probable that neither mule nor man can pass there in June; neither mule nor man could have stood on the trail when we were there. The waters were not out when the trail was laid out, and it is of the utmost importance that the whole locality should be carefully surveyed before the floods, and then again when they are at their height.

To return. Behind Port Douglas there stands this difficult hill. Before it lies a frozen lake for four months in the year, and when it is thawed (it had been quite open for some time when we were there) this little lake, about 2000 yards long by 250 to 600 wide, communicates with Harrison Lake by a tortuous, shallow, rapid stream, bearing only 12 inches water at its shallowest part (19th April). There is some flat land at the mouth, on both sides, but on the right bank liable to overflow, on the left dry; but both are liable to be frozen up by an unimportant bar of ice, however, compared with that which obstructs Port Douglas.

It is always referred to by storekeepers and carriers as the very worst and most difficult part of the whole trail to effect a transit over the frozen inner lake. A road might easily be constructed of a mile and a half in length along the left shore of this lake to the flat in question, which, however, will never be a good site; better, however, than the present, which if even the narrow channel and hill be disregarded or improved, has an irremovable objection in its ice, which this plan would avoid. It is densely wooded, so is all the valley behind Port Douglas.

On the right bank of the Lilloet a large flat is formed analagous to the delta at the mouth of many rivers, at present bearing a most magnificent growth of timber, principally cedar and hemlock. The soil is alluvial, and decayed vegetable matter, forming a rich red mould.

One or two small streams from the mountains north-west of the Harrison Lake fall through it. It is possible that a town might be raised here. In many respects it would have great advantages; it would have an open port all winter, and a level road up the valley of the Lilloet; whether it could be carried up that valley for 4 miles (where we quitted the stream), or even higher, by crossing and recrossing the stream, Mr. Nicol will probably report. We conceived that it would do for the site of a town when cleared, but the clearing would be very expensive; floods would probably, at all events occasionally, overflow the greater part of the level, and the bridging difficulties might be serious.

The Lilloet here is very violent, as is shown by the enormous bulk and quantity of drift-wood with which the upper end of Harrison Lake is strown, and which far surpass anything I have ever seen. We attempted to ascend it, in hopes of arriving at some level ground which we had been assured exists at a distance of 3 miles from the lake, and accessible for navigation; but, although the river is navigable for canoes, we satisfied ourselves that steam navigation was impossible. There is a fall of 15 feet in the 250 yards immediately above the lake, and a tortuous channel besides.

Bad as any harbour must be at this end of the lake, this side (the extreme right of the river-mouth) offers the best position; and, with the aid of the driftwood, a floating breakwater might be made. The only winds which are ever felt, apparently blow up and down the lake; and we found on our passage that the winds follow the shores.

It was surprising, with a population so unsettled, so often—a great part of it at least—changing, and so little habituated to the presence of law or justice, to find very few complaints, none of violent crimes.

It was alleged that liquor was sold unscrupulously to Indians. Some cases of alleged breach of contract, which the defendants maintained to be mistaken contracts, were brought forward; and it was also given us to understand that those who brought such circumstances to our notice were amongst the most audacious infringers of the law when the officers of the law were absent. It is of course impossible ever to do sudden justice under any written system of laws, and our efforts were not always successful in endeavouring to obtain in any way immediate satisfaction. But in a political point of view, these individual mischiefs were lost sight of, when it appeared that there was on all sides a submission to authority, a recognition of the right, which, looking to the mixed nature of the population, and the very large predominance of the Californian element, I confess I had not expected to meet. On the banks of the Lilloet there are very remunerative diggings, which I mention (though well known already) in order to make the remark that the gold in British Columbia is not all brought down by the Fraser, nor is the source of the gold confined to one region only in the canoe country or elsewhere. The Upper Lilloet Valley is separated from the Fraser by mountains in such a way as to exclude the idea that its course is through the primeval bed of some lake into which the ancient Fraser emptied all these treasures, or if not, the result would be the same, since the lake must have included half the colony at least.

The landing and embarking at Port Douglas appears to be extremely inconvenient. A great part of the town apparently will in June be standing in the water, and so far it will be convenient that barges should come alongside of the stores; but goods will have to be moved in boats, and I should think it must be very unhealthy. It is by far the most active, stirring-looking place we saw, nearly as large as Fort Yale.

The shores of Lake Harrison are in general steep to the water, and inaccessible for roads. There are some important breaks in the left shore, leading, as is believed, to the Cayoosh Lake. Another, near the foot, is reported by the Indians to lead in three days to the Forks of Thompson River.

But the rapids between the lake and Fraser River offer a very serious obstacle to the navigation here, and it may be that a short portage across from Fraser River into Harrison Lake may be found advisable from a point above the mouth of Harrison River into the lake near the hot spring, which we did not visit, but named "St. Alice's Well."

The distance from the lake to Fraser River I estimated at 11½ or 12 miles. The greater part of this is navigable for vessels of considerable draught. There is a shoal all along the exit from the lake bearing 5 to 6 feet in its shallowest part. About half-way down to the Fraser a considerable river comes in on the right bank, flowing from the reverse of the mountains, or rather hills, which lie west of Harrison Lake. This seems to change the nature of the current; however, from whatever cause, I never saw a river-bed present a similar appearance. The shoals being flat and liable to overflow, the river proper occupies a bed of some mile or mile and a half in width, extremely irregular in depth, gravelly, sometimes 9 feet deep, and at a boat's-length down the stream not 9 inches. The boatmen allege that this is caused by the salmon digging with their snouts. Giving the greatest credit to the fish and fishers for their industry and love of the marvellous, I thought it much

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more nearly resembled the effect of the "ripplemark" observed in sands at low tide, and also in dry sands exposed to steady winds.

But I never saw the appearance on such an enormous scale. In the summer, when the waters are high, stern-wheelers can pass. But it must take a vast increase in the body of the water, and equivalent to a great many inches rise in the Fraser itself, to raise the surface of this part of Harrison River by a single inch, being very rapid and of the breadth I have mentioned.

The remainder of my route is so well known to your Excellency that I shall gladly bring this extremely lengthy communication to a close.

The chief points which struck me, to make a brief recapitulation, were,—

1. The ready submission of a foreign population to the declaration of the will of the Executive, when expressed clearly and discreetly, however contrary to their wishes.

2. The great preponderance of the Californicised element of the population, and the paucity of British subjects.

3. The great riches, both auriferous and agricultural, of the country.

4. The great want of some fixity of tenure for agricultural purposes.

5. The absence of all means of communication, except by foaming torrents in canoes, or over goat-tracks on foot, which renders all productions of the country, except such as, like gold, can be carried with great ease in small weight and compass, practically valueless.

Distances.	Miles.	Days' Journey.	Remarks.
Fort Yale to—			
Spuzzem .. .. .	..	1	Much snow; regained the river after 4 miles.
Quayome (Boston Bar) ..	..	1½	
Lytton (Fort Dallas), Thompson Forks	..	2½	
Foster Bar .. .. .	..	1½	
Fountains .. .. .	..	1	
Cayoosh .. .. .	..	½	This is ½ a day, including the starting, unloading, &c., and ferry: it is a perfectly clear meadow.
Seton Foot.			
Seton Head (length of Lake Seton to Lake Anderson)	1½	..	The boatmen say 18 miles.
Anderson (the length of Lake Anderson),	..	..	The boatmen say 16 miles.
Pemberton (on Lake Lilloet)	24½	2	There is a good halfway-house.
Lake Lilloet (length upper lake).			
Hot springs, including lower lake 6 miles long.	13½	1	
Port Douglas (lower end Harrison Lake)	21	2	Another extra day for mules, 4 days from Lake Lilloet to Port Douglas.
Harrison River (from Lake to Fraser).	12	hours. 14½	From Port Douglas fore winds and down stream.

On foot the whole way except on the lakes and below Harrison Lake. The distances are estimated partly by adding the different distances arrived at as we came along the trail, some by time and estimated rate of speed. We generally walked 7 or 8 hours besides stoppages, sometimes 10 hours.